both the Central and State Government/Union Territories are the appropriate Government to oversee the implementation of the Act in their respective jurisdictions. As regards ensuring the payment of minimum wages to the tea plantation workers, the State Government of Assam is the appropriate Government for the purpose. On the basis of reply received from the State Government there is no information to the effect that tea labourers are not getting the minimum wages so fixed.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

Child labour

4572. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to eliminate the Child Labour which is around 1.25 crores children in the age group of 5 to 14 years;

(b) if so, whether Government have any action oriented programmes for the rehabilitation of the effected child labour; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. In order to eliminate child labour in all forms, Government has formulated a National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme. The NCLP Scheme envisages a sequential action-oriented approach for the abolition of child labour starting with children working in most hazardous occupations to covering all forms of child labour. The NCLP Scheme has been extended to cover 250 districts across 21 States of the country. Under the Scheme, special schools are opened for the working children withdrawn from hazardous occupations with the objective of preparing them to join the formal education system. Educational instructions, vocational training, mid-day-meal, stipend and health-checks are essential components of the NCLP Scheme.

Provision of jobs through employment exchanges

†4573. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) the number of employment exchanges in the country at present;

(b) the number of unemployed persons registered in these exchanges; and

(c) the number of unemployed persons provided with the jobs during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYEMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) At present 947 employment exchanges are functioning in the country.

(b) Around 4.05 crore jobseekers, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, are registered with these exchanges as on 31.12.2004.

(c) Placements effected by the employment exchanges during 2002, 2003 and 2004 were around 1.43 lakh, 1.55 lakh and 1.38 lakh respectively.

Scheme for welfare of handloom weavers

4574. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the EPF and PF Act, 1952 with reference to the handloom sector;

(b) whether Government of Karnataka has requested to exempt Karnataka Handloom Development Corporation from the purview of EPF and PF Act, 1952, as the State has evolved a near identical scheme for the welfare of the handloom weavers; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) The Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 is applicable to the industries engaged in manufacture of textiles and employing 20 or more employees. The handloom sector falls under the scheduled head "Textiles" and hence the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 is applicable to the handloom sector as well.